

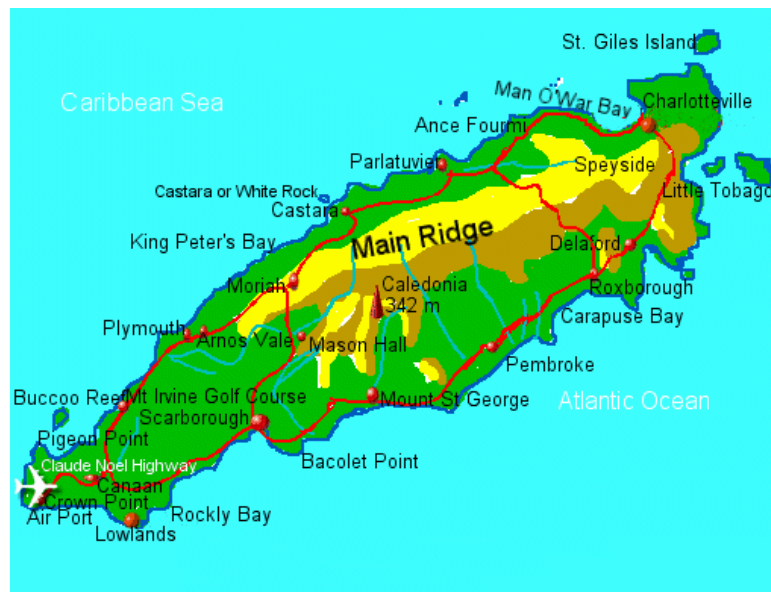
POINTS FOR CONSIDERATION

The Draft Constitution (Amendment)

Tobago Self Government Bill, 2021

And

**The Draft Tobago Island Administration Bill,
2021**



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Points

- There is a need to make it **understood** at the beginning of the bill that this amendment is in context of **Tobago self-governance** for Tobago as a unitary state of Trinidad and Tobago and **not Independence, not federal or secession**.
- Section 53, 75 A, chapter 11 A. There is a need for a more detailed definition of what Tobago means and what it comprises of. It is understood that the maritime boundaries have technical issues, but must be considered for conversation, as the seas of Tobago is very important to the lives of Tobagonian.
- **Equality** of status between the two islands needs to be explained and expanded on in detail. (Nb. equality means equality and if there is to be equality both parties will have to compare, bring to the table, and share equally.
- Were some of the other **human rights** left out on page 2, paragraph 2 .eg emotional, spiritual, intellectual, physical etc. Can they be included?
“The amendment will acknowledge the right of the people of Tobago to determine their political, economic social and cultural development.
 - Clause 18 (The Tobago Legislature) it is believed that 26 members is too large.
 - There can be less councillors.

➤ Clause 22-30 The allocation of 6.8% is not **EQUAL** and it not enough for the development of Tobago. How was this figure arrived? Was there a needs analysis done for the residence of Tobago? Did the issue if COVID and its destruction economically of Tobago taken into consideration.

● Clause 15,16 and 17 the primer should be consulted in the appointing of public officers can lead to **some abuse of power the primer is a bias or an unprofessional individual.**

● Motion of no confidence Page 21 -3 b

Is there an error where the President revokes the appointment of the Premier by the Primer or is it that the premier aske for his own removal?

● 141 L Qualification and disqualification
2 a) Why can't a member have allegiance to other countries.

● 144. d The Mediation committee (clause 19)
Can the 1 appointed person from the Executive council be specified?

-It is my opinion that a “nonpolitical” individual be also included.

➤ As it relates to **oversight**:

It will be nice for Civil society members and Youths to be part of the oversight and committees.

- Clause 8,11 and 13 The word **exclusive** needs to be removed. As it relates to the Tobago Island Government managing of Tobago's affairs.

- As it relates to the exceptions of the TIG (national matters.)

If Trinidad is overruled, destroyed, or captured by force so how, should there be some provisions that allow us to have powers to act on our own.

-Also external affairs which is an exception, a listing of these affairs will be appreciated.

- Assemblyman" means a person referred to in section 5(1)(a)
- It is recommended that Assembly woman can be added, or it can be changed to Assembly representative.

➤ Fourth schedule (Clause 28)

- As it relates to borrowing, a maximum amount of borrowing should be allowed for Tobago to be made without the need for approval from the Minister of Finance.
- 28 (2)

Purpose of borrowing:

- 2 d) Just a sit note, this can be abused if the wrong individuals are power.
- Is it that borrowing can take place 5 times for the year, is there a stipulated amount of times and is there a maximum amount that the island should be allowed to borrow?
- Clause 24 Tobago Funds needs to be reviewed.

➤ The fifth schedule (section 75 , have some exclusions /reshuffling from the previous bill.)

- State lands
- Fisheries
- Food Production
- Forestry
- Town and Country Planning
- Infrastructure, including air and sea transportation, wharves and airports and public utilities
- Telecommunications
- The Environment
- Customs and Excise
- Licensing
- Health Services
- Library Services
- Marketing
- Valuations
- Postal services and collection of revenue therefrom
- Statistics and Information
- Plant and Animal Quarantine-Land and **marine parks** (parks was placed in 4th)
- Museums, Archives, historical sites, and historical buildings (placed in fourth

✓ **As some of these categories that were excluded and moved to schedule 4 it will limit the ability to make certain laws for the betterment of the island. Consideration should be taken to include the above so that Tobago self-governance can truly take place.**

OTHER SUGGESTIONS THAT CAN BE INCLUDED IN THE SELF GOVERNMENT BILL.

*-There should be a Revenue Generating Committee for Tobago.(Tobago needs to start to come up with a lot of different ways to generate money, especially in this time period.

*- It is my observation that the President now **has a lot of** roles and responsibilities in the matters of Tobago, and it is recommended that he/she has a base in Tobago for regular effective communication or a Secretary to the President based in Tobago for effective communication.

In conclusion I am no expert but an ordinary resident of Tobago. This bill to me is a profoundly serious bill and therefore I decided to take part. I appreciate that the public was able to share their views and I do hope that the Committee will take into consideration most of the concerns and issues that the residents of Tobago brought to the table. Thank you again for being flexible and understanding and I look forward to the presentation of the final bill so that Tobago could be well on its way to self-governance.

**Respectfully,
Ishla Bedlow**